

## **Top Ten – Information You Will Need in a Medical Emergency**

Be prepared in case you need to arrange emergency medical treatment for your loved one. Gather the following information and keep it handy:

**Names of the patient's doctors.** If you don't know anything else, this is probably the most important piece of information. Why? Chances are good that the patient's doctors can provide much of the rest of the information needed as well as more details about specific health histories.

**Birth dates.** Often medical records and insurance information are cataloged according to birth date. This can improve communication in an emergency or a crisis.

**List of allergies.** This is especially important if the patient is allergic to medication — penicillin, for example.

**Major medical problems.** This includes such diseases as diabetes or heart disease.

**List of medications.** It's especially important that a doctor know if the patient uses blood thinners.

**Cultural concerns / Religious beliefs.** This is particularly important if beliefs might impact care.

**Insurance information.** This includes Medicare, MassHealth (Medicaid) and third party coverage. You should know the name of the coverage and policy number.

**Prior surgery.** List past medical procedures, such as cardiac bypass surgery.

**Lifestyle information.** Does the patient drink alcohol or use tobacco?

**Assistive equipment.** Does the patient use a cane, wheelchair, hearing aid, false teeth, or other durable equipment?

**Health care proxy** - designating another person to act as the patient's health care agent with the authority to make all health care decisions (unless specifically limited) for the grantor should he/she become unable to make or communicate those decisions.

~adapted from Mayo Clinic Senior Health